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AUTHOR Giauque, Gerald S.
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ABSTRACT

This is the first phonetics book to be developed for use in first-year French courses. The intent of the book is to help the student acquire confidence in his ability to look at 85 percent of the words in the French dictionary and be able to pronounce those words correctly, as a result of his sounding out the words. When an American student looks at a foreign word, he may associate it with letters or groups of letters in the American phonic system. After an individual has learned to read (i.e. to associate sounds with symbols), he has difficulty understanding that a letter has a different sound in another language. This becomes evident when a language teacher pronounces a foreign word, and the student displays lack of comprehension until the word is presented to him in visual form. A concentrated comparative study of the sound-symbol correlatives in both the mother tongue and the target language makes the student aware of the similarities and differences of the sound systems of the two languages. The approach described is a systematic effort to associate the distinctively French sound with the printed letters. (Author/CLK)

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FRENCH PHONICS FOR AMERICANS

Self-teaching

Copyright
Dr. Gerald S. Giauque
1976

Department of Modern Languages
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, Georgia 30332

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PREFACE

This book is not written for specialists. It is for the average American who wants to learn how to speak and understand French reasonably well, but who does not know where to begin. The tone of the book is informal and non-technical. Several of my friends in linguistics have criticized the book severely for a variety of reasons: (1) No mention whatsoever is made of the International Phonetic Alphabet; (2) the difference between vowels in English, which are diphthongized, and vowels in French, which are not, is hardly noted; (3) the differences in the point of articulation between English consonants and French consonants is ignored; (4) long and short vowels are not considered; (5) very little mention is made of intonation and the pronunciation of super-segmentals. And the list of criticisms goes on.

But my goal has not been to write a book for students who already know French, much less for trained linguists. I am interested in people who do <u>not</u> know French but who want to learn, not only read it, but to speak, understand and write it. Those who use the book demonstrate great enthusiasm for it because it helps them compare French pronunciation to English pronunciation meaningfully and because it is easy to understand. The number of student drop-outs has decreased, more students are actually using the language in class, and formerly dubious colleagues are amazed at the facility with which students who have used the book are able to communicate in French.

Hopefully you will have a similarly positive experience.

To the Teacher (and the interested student)

French Phonics for Americans is the first phonics book ever to be developed specifically for use in first year French courses. The philosophical underpinnings for the book are in a paper entitled "A Forgotten Key to Language Acquisition: Phonetics".* Briefly stated, that philosophy is as follows: When an American student looks at a French word, he sees through eyes which have had twelve or more years of experience associating letters or groups of letters with the American phonic system. After an individual has learned to read, (i.e., to associate sounds with symbols,) he has difficulty with the concept that the symbol may have a different sound in another language. This becomes especially evident when a foreign language teacher pronounces any of a large number of words in the target language (especially French) and the student displays lack of comprehension until the word is presented to him in visual form, upon which he understands perfectly. Only a concentrated comparative study of the phonic values of symbols in both the mother tongue and the target language can make the student aware of the similarities and differences of the sound system of the two languages. A student with average background in English phonics can master the phonic system of the target language in a very short time, generally between 15 and 20 classroom hours, for French. With this mastery, he is able to pronounce correctly, without hesitation or prompting, 80% to 85% of all words he sees in the dictionary of the target language, including those with which he is totally unfamiliar. He is also able to understand a large number of cognates because he is able to visualize them immediately. Since 60% of the English dictionary is derived from French, he is able to understand, after only four or five weeks, a good deal of spoken French on a variety of subjects, even though he has never studied the vocabulary. This gives him confidence in himself, increases his desire to learn more French and helps him understand that he can pronounce and use correctly French words which are cognates.**

The book is therefore intended to be used during the first four or five weeks of the first year French course, although it may be used in any course in which the student's grasp of French pronunciation is weak. It may be used in an individualized instruction mode by the person who desires to supplement his intermediate or advanced French courses with material on pronunciation. Self-correcting tests accompany the text. A cassette tape accompanies the text so the student may (1) listen to a native French speaker pronounce all the examples in each paragraph and (2) test his ability to associate the spoken word with written symbols (i.e. letters or groups of letters). variation of each test is available so that the student may repeat any test he fails. The book contains three parts: the main part consists of a general overview of French pronunciation; a section entitled Addenda follows in which more difficult concepts and exceptions are treated, and which will probably form the basis for a second year French Phonics for Americans; the

third section deals with linking. The table of contents permits the student to easily locate the sound of any given letter or group of letters for review purposes.

A mimeographed version of the book was used in two sections of first year French at Georgia Institute of Technology with success in 1974 - 1975.

* Available upon request.

** I do not try to teach the fine points of French during the first year. If a student uses a false cognate, I advise him of the error, but I do not castigate him. My primary goal is to help the student acquire the confidence he needs to attempt to speak in French. For the same reason, I have indicated at various points that a fuller (usually historical) explanation of a given phenomenon is available to the student in written form upon request. Thus the highly motivated or gifted student has an opportunity to explore a problem, while the average student is led to consider only those items which are of prime importance.

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1. So you've decided to take French! You've made a good decision. Why's that? you say. Because you already know a great many French words right now, even if you think you don't know the first thing about French. Here is the reason: There are a great many words in French which are spelled exactly the same as they are in English. They are pronounced differently and that's the reason you need this book: to help you learn how to pronounce with a French accent these words you already know. Some French words which are the same as those in English are table, nation, important, général, information, science, suite, route, president, difference, partial, decision, etc. The list is extremely long. These words are called cognates. Remember that important word, because we will use it often. A cognate is a word which is spelled the same or nearly the same as a word in another language. Compare these cognates:

French	English
confortable	comfortable
septembre	September
artistique	artistic
démocratie	democracy
mathematiques	mathematics
docteur	doctor
institut	institute
technologie	technology

Why does English share so many cognates with French? I'll explain that to you if you'll ask me, but I don't have time to go into it here.* An important French playwright, Alexander Dumas, loved to read Shakespear in English. One day he stopped reading, looked up and exclaimed "English is just mis-pronounced French!" So let's learn the real pronunciation!

2. Phonetics and phonics are words which mean sounds. You may have had a good teacher who taught you phonics when you were learning to read English, or you may never have learned phonics. Either way, this little book will help you learn more about the phonetic values (sounds) of English and, of course, French. Everyone knows there are five vowels, a, e, i, o and u, and that the other 21 letters of the alphabet are consonants. (Note: w and y are sometimes vowels or consonants but that isn't important now.) The problem is that the sounds of these letters very often depend on their environment. In English, a word that ends in e usually has a vowel with a "long" sound in the middle of the word: same, mete, kite, rote, mute. But that rule doesn't always hold water as the following words, which rhyme with the first series, demonstrate: rain, meet, fight, coat and loot. In French, however, life is more predictable. Once you learn a few basic rules, you will be able to pronounce almost any word correctly the first time you see it. As a matter of fact, that is what is your main goal will be: At the end of 12 class hours, you should be able to pronounce correctly 80% of all the words in the French dictionary on the first try and without receiving prompting from anyone. As soon as you know how a French word sounds, you will be able to visualize and write it when you hear someone else pronounce it. Since a high percentage of French words are cognates, you will already understand a good deal of spoken French. Speaking it yourself will be just around the corner. And I guarantee that within a short time you will be speaking it.

*The explanation is, however, available in written form upon request.

3. Let's begin with some French vowels. The easiest one is i. In French, it is pronounced ee in 90 percent of the cases. Say these French words, some of which are cognates, and note how you say the letter I: police, si, Paris, Nice, liberté, fine. (y rhymes with i in French.)

4. A word about rules. Don't get the idea into your head that rules cannot be broken. A rule, in language, is like a theory in science: it may change. Too many people have the idea that there are rules and exceptions to rules; it would be better to say that we haven't done enough research to make a better rule that eliminates the exception. If you think you have a better explanation for some phenomenon in language, there is a good possibility you are right. The rules are supposed to help you assimilate and make sense of the material, but if they start to get in your way, junk them. There is a new science called generative linguistics which is interested in studying the laws of languages. In this new field we develop new theories to try to determine the most fundamental general laws of language. No one believes that the rules are absolutes anymore, and there is no reason you should either. You will find that I am constantly making up new rules to fit the sounds of French. A linguist, by the way, is not a person who knows several languages: that is a polyglot. A linguist may know only one language, but he is interested in describing language, just as any scientist attempts to describe other phenomena. Mathematics and linguistics are quite similar in many respects, because they use symbols in a way no other disciplines do. We will discuss this in more detail later. Now this is the first problem an American has with French. He looks at these cognates and pronounces them as he would in English. But you, you're different. You know how to say i as a Frenchman would: Eet ees easy, eesn't eet? Look around the room: think of some words containing the letter i and then imagine how a Frenchman would have trouble learning to pronounce those words in English: the letter i in police doesn't rhyme with i in this, which doesn't rhyme with i in fine. Pity the poor Frenchman learning English. Now, note the footnote below and then pronounce the following words out loud in French, making the i sound like ee (see):

si *	dite *	lisse *	bile	vite
vif *	chic	il	tarif	ville
site *	artiste	mille	Alice	vie

5. Let's move on to o. O is always o as in English go and no, not like ah as in gone, or a or none. Say these words:

la prose *	la blonde*	la rose
pose*	il expose	longitude
office	la côte	le croquet

Now, be careful; don't pronounce these in English, just in French. Make the o rhyme with no:

l'office	stylo	oral	politique
la colonie	l'olive	solitaire	logique

*Pronounce all the letters except i just as you would pronounce them in English. Do not try to give a "new" or "French" pronunciation to any letters except those which you are studying.

6. Let's go on to consonants. You may have heard that we Frenchmen pronounce only half the word. Well, there is a reason for that and I'll tell you if you ask me.* It is true that we often do not pronounce the final consonant of a word which ends in a consonant, such as t or d, s or z, g or x, p or b, n or m. You already know quite a few of those words which you have adopted into your language:

ballet	gourmet	débutant
bouquet	coup d'état	dépôt**
buffet	croquet	esprit de corps
cabaret	débris	ricochet

Of course all these are cognates. Now, if you hear a French word and can't decide what it means, you should scribble down on paper what you hear. Or visualize it in your head. If the last sound you hear is not a consonantal sound, you can probably add a t, s or z, just for good measure, and you will have the correct French word. Pronounce these French words out loud.

dos	écrit	parfait	tôt	vos
propos	surpris	galop	prix	projet
Paris	lit	sot	filet	Louis

Did you pronounce the final consonant? If you did, write out the word, like this dos then scratch out the consonant like this dos and pronounce it. Pronounce all the words just as you would in English (except i and o which you will pronounce in French) but scratch out the final consonant.

7. You have probably also heard that in French, we always stress the last syllable of a word. In general, that is true. Now go back over paragraphs 4 through 6 again and be sure to put the stress on the last syllable while you pronounce the words. You are sounding more and more like a Frenchman.

8. The letter a is easy. At least it should be easy, but a lot of Americans try to make it complicated. If you don't know the rule in English, let's review it: a is pronounced like ah except when e is at the end of the word: mama, saw, want, far, etc. but same, gale, date, etc. In French, a is always pronounced like ah: la, madame, ballet, cabaret, Paris.

9. In English, you sometimes have more than one vowel standing next to another, and this can make a difference in pronunciation. There is a difference between ran and rain because of the i; cot and coat; set and seat; lad and laud. In French, o is different from ou. Compare the following words in French and English which rhyme.

English	French
cool	coule
fool	foule
too	tout
voo doo	vous
do	doux

Now contrast these French words:

tôt	tout

*Available in written form upon request.

**Pay no attention to accent marks at this point. We will discuss them later.

sot	sou
pot	poux
vos	vous
mot	mou

(Hey! Did you not pronounce the final consonant? If you did, go back to paragraph 6.) Recalling what you have studied, say these French words:

oui	nous	poulet
goût	gourmet	coucou
loup	soupe	boule

10. Now, just to make sure you haven't gotten lost, take the quiz on page 34. Correct your own work. If you get 85% correct, you may go on to paragraph 11. If not, go back and review and take the quiz again. If you fail again, write the answers to the study questions on page 30. and take the quiz again. If you still fail, listen to the tape. Follow this procedure for each quiz.

11. You know how to pronounce three vowels, and one group of vowels. What are they? _____. You have learned about the pronunciation of some final consonants. What are three or four or five of the most common consonants which we French do not pronounce when they come at the end of a word? _____.

The consonants in the English word CaReFuL are pronounced when they come at the end of words. Do not forget to pronounce correctly the sounds of French you have learned. Pronounce letters you have not studied the same way you would pronounce them in English (unless you already know them in French).

avec	le lac	sec	le sac	le roc
Frontenac	finir	oral	amour*	cognac
le four*	le tour	car	tir	le jour*
le chef	le tarif	vif	bref	courrir
choc	il	appel	le fil	le col

Unfortunately, this rule holds water only part of the time. Many verbs in French end in -er; in these verbs, the final r is not pronounced and the e is pronounced -ay as in day. The same holds true if you are dealing with a noun or adjective of two or more syllables ending in -ier: Pronounce the i and then -er as -ay:

former	parler	le premier
citer	couper	familier
accepter	le papier	particulier
bouter	le dernier	le soulier

NOTE: In the following words, the final consonant is not pronounced: final c: le taba*c*, le por*c*, estoma*c*; final l: le fusi*l*, genti*l*, outi*l*, le sourci*l*. These are high frequency words and are sufficiently distinguishable, on account of the first syllable, that the final consonant need not be pronounced in order for the word to be understood. So, in resumé, be careful with CaReFuL.

12. That leads us very nicely into the next subject; final e. A lot of words in French end in this letter, which, although it is not pronounced, has a lot of influence. Any consonant or group of consonants which immediately precede final e must be pronounced. If these consonants are clearly and distinctly pronounced, the meaning of the word is different than if the final consonants are pronounced sloppily. Now this is not

*Pronounce ou according to the rule in Paragraph 9.

always true in English. For example, you can say "port" very distinctly in English, or very sloppily, but you haven't changed the meaning of the word. In French, these two pronunciations would be two different words.

English		French	
Distinct	Sloppy		
port	port	porte= door, gate	port= harbor, port
font	font	font= verb (faire)	fonte= adj. and noun

Now that you know about final e, pronounce these pairs of words. In the first, do not pronounce the consonant; in the second, do.

le rapport	le coup	dit	le galop	le tas
il rapporte	elle coupe	dite	il galope	l'extase
clos	l'abus	le refus	le chat	frit
close	il abuse	elle refuse	la chatte	frite
part	flot	bat	le dernier	le premier
il parte	flotte	batte	la dernière	la première

13. What happens if you have two consonants at the end of a word, as in corps and effort? Pronounce the next to the last consonant if it is an r but not if it is some other consonant. This is an extension of the CaReFuL rule.

d'abord	alors	tard	divers *	univers *
le sport	tort	couvert *	part	mort

14. The letter s gives Americans difficulty, yet it is a perfectly easy sound for Americans to make. It is also one of the sounds which makes the French language sound appealing. The rule is very simple, but first you must know what the word "intervocalic" means. "Intervocalic" means between two vowels (or groups of vowels): We who speak French always pronounce an intervocalic s as z, and you do too, sometimes: rose, close, use, pose, tease, etc. But sometimes you don't either: dose, base, obese, curiosity, usurp. In French, we always pronounce a single intervocalic s as z:

la phrase	il abuse	diviser	user
poser	la rose	il base	il vise

Some words invariably give Americans trouble: curiosité, diocèse, la philosophie, la poésie, la prosodie, excuse, suffisant, philosophe. Be sure you don't say curiossity or philossophie.

15. A lot of Americans confuse the sounds of intervocalic single s and intervocalic double s. In French as in English, double s always has a hissing sound, as in the word hiss. Compare the two groups of words, one of which has a z sound and the other a hissing sound:

il lise	il lisse	la ruse	la Russie
il base	il basse	il vise	il visse
la case	il casse	il l'épouse	il les pousse

*See last sentence of paragraph 17.

16. You learned in Paragraph 13 that final e influences the pronunciation of a consonant of a word, but that it is not pronounced as such. Let's modify that now: if you find a word that consists of only one or two consonants plus e, you will have to pronounce the e, because it is the only vowel in the word. There are no words without vowels. The following words all rhyme: je, ce, que, se, te, de, le, me, ne. This list of nine words is complete and contains no exceptions. The sound rhymes with English "uh": le=luh; de=duh. This is called e caduc. In addition, ANY WORD in which e is FOLLOWED or PRECEEDED by a CONSONANT PLUS L OR R (in that order!)* has the same type of e: that is, it rhymes with "uh!"

livre	sombre	mètre	secret	Chevrolet
table	octobre	cidre	peser	secrétaire
capable	novembre	rompre	rebattre	revenir

17. The letter e carries an accent mark about 50% of the time. You have already learned about e without accent mark. é, è and ê can be considered three additional letters of the alphabet and you should learn right now what they sound like: é rhymes with -ay in lay and day, while è and ê rhyme with e in let and bed. Pronounce the following:

é as in (day) and (lay)		è and ê (as in (let) and (bed))	
il a parlé	il a cassé	il pèse	il complète
il a isolé	elle a épousé	la fête	frêle
nous avons posé	Amérique	même	tête
elle a coulé	vous avez livré	achète	particulière

You should be aware, by now, that the same sound can be represented by more than one spelling. In French, you will find that there are several ways, in addition to é, of representing that sound. In addition to the group in the left hand column above, note these:

A. The last syllable in all infinitives ending in -er: parler, casser, isoler, accepter, épouser, poser:
B. The last syllable of any word ending in e plus a consonant (especially t and z): parlez, cassez, isolez, posez, chez, gourmet, bouquet, buffet, ballet:
C. One syllable words ending in -es: Ces, mes, les, ses. Note that this rule does not apply to words such as portes, parles, roses, because they would be polysyllabic (have more than one syllable) if -es rhymed with é: por-tay, etc.
D. The last three letters of polysyllabic words ending in -ier sound like "yea:" papier=pa-pyea; premier, dernier, soulier, particulier.

BUT in words containing e plus a double consonant or a pronounced r, e rhymes with è (as in bed): mettez, selle, greffe, serre, cesser, vers mer.

18. In the previous paragraph (an extremely important one, by the way), you learned a lot of homonyms. Homonyms are words which sound alike

*The rule does not apply if r or l precedes the consonant; i.e. porte has no e caduc, but livre does. See Adenda, #16A, B and C, for further information (p. 25).

but, their spellings and meanings are different. You have homonyms in English: there and their, here and hear, hair and hare. We have more homonyms in French than you do in English, as you just saw. Parlé, parlez and parler all sound alike. Yet if you say them in a sentence, we almost never have a problem understanding you. We know which one you mean because we can tell from the context (and from the spelling, when we see it written).

It is also important to note that homographs (homo=same; graph=write) exists, that is, words of identical (or nearly identical) spelling, but different pronunciation. In English you have lead (to conduct) and lead (a metal), minute (a division of time) and minute (very small).

19. A VERY IMPORTANT HOMOGRAPH PAIR IN FRENCH IS -AI-. This group -ai- may rhyme with either é or è, depending on its context. Many Americans have trouble with this because they fail to learn a simple rule. HERE IT IS: -ai- plus one letter rhymes with é; -ai-plus two or more letters rhymes with è. If you prefer a more complicated version, try this: -ai- plus a silent e or a silent consonant rhymes with é; -ai- plus a pronounced consonant (i.e., consonant plus e) rhymes with è. Now test yourself. Say "Je sais qu'il connaît la laide Américaine."*

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE that -ei- behaves like -ai-. The words in column four assonate exactly with those in column three: that is, their vowel sounds rhyme perfectly. Pronounce these words out loud:

é		è	è	é
English	French	-ai-	-ei-	
ray	raie	qu'il plaise	peine	ayant **
May	mais	anglaise	veine	payer
play	plaie	laisser	Seine	ces rayons
say	sait	baiser	reine	nous essayons
gay	gaie	baisser	Madeleine	ayons

20. Let's make sure that we are not going too fast. The first steps are the most important. This section of the book has been presented by the letters e and s and their friends and the word "careful." Take the second quiz as you did the first one and do not go on to paragraph 21 until you have passed 85 percent of the material.

21. You learned about groups of vowels such as ou in paragraph 9 and you have just learned about ai and its two pronunciations (é and è) in paragraph 17. Let's look at au. In English this symbol may sound like ow as in Von Braun; or it may sound like ah as in automobile. But in French, it always (always!) rhymes with the letter o. So the French word auto sounds like Oh-toe. In addition, this sound may be written as either eau or au. NOTE that e is silent in eau; i.e., beauté is pronounced like bauté. Pronounce the following words in French:

la pause	la peau	autre	Bordeaux
beau	le plateau	le château	les journaux
causer	le trousseau	les tableaux	Deauville
il faut	la beauté	autour	saut

*sais and connaît rhyme with say; laide and Américaine rhyme with led.

** Review paragraph 3 and see Addenda #19A (p. 26).

You want to pronounce that a don't you? Resist the temptation. There is an explanation concerning the historical development of the au sound, but you will have to ask me for it.*

22. You have learned all the single vowels except one: u. First, review the sound of the vowel group ou. Say English "You fool!" as if you really meant it. Note the vowel sound: oooooooo. Now say the word "feel" with the same vigor: Feeeeeell. Notice where your tongue is as you say both words. When you say oooo, your tongue is on the bottom of your mouth; when you say eeee, it is closer to the top of your mouth. The French letter u requires that you keep your tongue in the eeee position. Now, with your fingers, push the sides of your mouth until your lips are in the position of ooooo. Now with your mouth like that, say eeee. You have just said French u. French u is as much an i sound as it is a u sound and many Americans, when they hear a French u, mistake it for an eeee sound. This is as it should be. Pronounce the following groups of words:

English			French	
boo	bee	beautiful	bu	bout
do	dee	dew	du	doux
voo(doo)	vee	view	vu	vous
too	tee	tew	tu	tout
moo	me	music	mu	mou

You are doing well. You should be hearing a very distinct difference between the ou and the u in French. Most Americans think the u sound is hard to pronounce, but the problem generally is that they are not careful enough to pronounce ou correctly; if you say ou so that it really rhymes with fool, tool and cool, you should have no problem with the u sound. Now pronounce these polysyllabic (many syllable) words in French:

justice	refuser	étude
la Russie	université	murmure
unis	utile	la curiosité

23. You are probably beginning to become aware of a very important concept: The letters of the alphabet are the same in almost every Western European language, but they have different values in different languages. Letters are symbols. They stand for something, just as + and ÷ stand for something. For just a moment now, try to remember the experiences you had when you were 6, 7, 8 and 9 years old, when you were learning to read your own native language. Were you able to associate the sounds with the symbols easily or did it all seem irrelevant? The symbols, unfortunately, are not mnemonic devices (that is, the shape of the symbol does not help you remember the sound it is supposed to represent), but you nevertheless were eventually able to associate the visual representation of the letter with the sound of the letter. What you now have to do is unlearn some of what you learned so many years ago and re-structure your way of seeing things so that you associate sounds and symbols (or letters) as the French do, instead of as Americans do. This means broadening your point of view of the world. This re-structuring process is part of the liberalizing aspect of your educational experience: learning to see reality (which you have always thought was an absolute and un-changing reality) as relative, rather than something fixed. Eventually you will begin to realize that one of the basic goals in your education should be to acquire the ability to decipher and understand symbols, to assign them different values depending upon their context, and

*Available in written form upon request.

to see new and meaningful relationships or systems (in our case--a language which is just as logical, in its context, as is English). This is why mathematics, which deals so much with symbols, is one of the most important fields you can study. We French, by the way, who like to consider our language to be a very precise language, feel especially strongly that mathematics should be a part of every education. This too, is the reason that the B.S. and the B.A. degrees require a solid foundation to either math or languages, because both introduce the idea of symbols as no other discipline can.

24. That's enough preaching for today. Let's get on to some more specifics.

Another very important group of vowels is eu (sometimes spelled oeu): You have already learned how to pronounce ou and au, and you know that each of these groups has only one correct pronounciation. But eu has three. The first one is represented by the word eu; it rhymes exactly with the letter u. Pronounce these expressions:

J'ai eu tort. Il a eu des problèmes.

The other two pronunciations of eu are difficult for a beginner to distinguish and they are both close enough to e in je, me, se etc., that these latter sounds can be used as a stepping stone to the eu sounds. Say the following pairs of words, remembering to say e as in octobre: "uh":

de ~ deux ce ~ ceux que ~ feu, peu, eux

When eu is followed by a pronounced consonant, it is simply lengthened or drawn out. Say the word "sir" as if you were from the rural South. You get "suh", right? You have just said "soeur" in French. Say "seul", in French. It should sound like "s-uh-l". "Jeune" should rhyme with "punch".

la soeur	le seul	chauffeur	le fleuve
le boeuf	oeuf	le beurre	la peur
jeune	le professeur	leur	la preuve

25. Another vowel group is oi, which like au and eu is pronounced entirely differently than what it looks like to American eyes. Pronounce it like wa in water and you will have it perfectly. Say these words out loud:

oiseau *	Blois	le coiffeur *
la loi *	le pois	le toit
je bois	il doit	le mois
la foi	le noix	

26. How many letters are there in the alphabet? 26 you say? How many vowels? 5? You are right, and this leaves 21 consonants. But there are a great deal more than just 26 sounds. Learning to associate the varied sounds that a given letter or group of letters stands for is the most important thing, I think, that you have ever learned in the process of education. Because of that, you know how to read and write your mother tongue. Because the symbols are different in French and English, you need to learn what the French values of the letters are, rather than assume that the French and English values are the same.

Most people think that the letters of the alphabet are just there and

*Be sure to pronounce correctly those letters you have already learned. If we have not studied the pronunciation of a particular letter, however, pronounce it in English.

that they are totally unrelated to each other. Let's see if that is really true. Say the following letters: p and b; f and v; t and d. Do you see that these pairs of letters are pronounced almost exactly the same way? The only difference is that some are voiced and some are unvoiced. In the voiced consonants, you begin making your vocal cords function before you actually articulate the sound. In the unvoiced consonants, your vocal cords do not begin to function until an instant after you have articualated the sound. Some unvoiced consonants are p, f, t, k, s. Some voiced consonants are b, v, d, g (hard), and z. Almost every consonant belongs to a set of two, or in other words, is closely related to another consonant. This is useful to know and will help you predict why certain consonants will and should behave certain ways, as you will see later.

27. Have you ever noticed that one of the characteristics of a French accent is that the th sound is never pronounced th by a Frenchman? There is a reason.* First of all, it is too complicated for him. Americans think this symbol has only one sound, but it really has two. It represents both voiced and unvoiced sounds (or phonemes). Say the following English words very slowly and you will see that you are merely whispering the th sound: thought, through, thing, theme, think, thesis. These are unvoiced. Now say the following words in which th is voiced: this, them, the, those, that. Now, in the following words, which th's are voiced and which are not? catholic, method, thorough, thin, both, booths, clothing. And now, how do you pronounce th in the word "clothes"? With all this confusion, is it little wonder that the Frenchman throws up his hands in despair and exclaims: Zee Engleesh language, she eez too compleequé to prononcer! The h in th is a symbol that the tongue is placed between the teeth in English. Try it. This feels funny to a Frenchman. In French, the letter h has no special meaning in this case and the th is pronounced exactly the same way as a t. Say the following French words out loud according to the pattern you see in parentheses:

catholique (catolique)	méthode (métode)
le thème (tème)	la théorie (téorie)
la pathologie (patologie)	la cathédrale (catédrale)
Elisabeth (Elizabet)	le théâtre (téatre)
la mathématique (matématique)	l'athlète (atlète)

28. Now let's look at another strange phenomenon in English (at least in the eyes of we Frenchman). How do you say the word "nation"? Don't you say "nay-shun"? And "notion"? "No-shun"? Then why don't you spell it like that? There's a reason--ask me if you like.* In French, we always pronounce -tion and -sion without that sh sound. Nation is pronounced "na-see-on"; passion is "pa-see-on".** Say the following words out loud and be sure you do not say "sh".

attrition	la potion	la friction
organisation	la déclaration	aviation
la coalition	la dérivation	la tradition
action	la conversation	la mécanisation

Note that every one of these words is feminine, i.e. takes la.

29. You have probably heard that we French put the main accent on the last syllable of a word. This is different from English, where the

* Explanation available in written form on request.

**The word "question" is an exception; it is pronounced kes-tee-on, not kes-see-on.

accent may be on the last syllable, as in cadet, or on the next to the last syllable as in abstraction or on the second from the last syllable, as in obstacle. In general, however, it is true that the accent is on the last syllable of French words. I can give you the historical explanation of this, if you would like to have it.* Pronounce the following French words, being sure to accentuate the last syllable:

le cadet	la présidence	la solution
la complicité	organisation	le cabinet
abstraction	université	la télévision

30. Take quiz number 3. Do not move ahead unless you pass it.

31. As you realize, a great many words are made up of more than one syllable. You may or may not, depending on your elementary education, have learned how to divide English words into syllables. It is very probable, however, that even if you did not formally learn how to do this, you have picked it up on your own. Everytime you spell a word, you break the word into its component parts. It would seem silly to you to spell the word bookstore by visualizing its component parts to consist of the syllables bo-okst-ore or even books-tore. Everyone knows that it is book-store.

32. If you are going to understand and speak French, you need to be able to identify several syllables strung together when you see or hear them. Take the word Paris. You probably divide it into Par and is. For you, capital is cap-i-tal. But a Frenchman (and, by the way, Spaniards and Italians, too) would say Pa-ris and ca-pi-tal. SO HERE IS THE RULE, and it's very important. In English, you usually end a syllable with a consonant sound, as you have just seen. In French, whenever possible, you end a syllable with a vowel sound. This means you divide right after a vowel, not right after a consonant. If two or more vowels are next to each other, they are pronounced as if they are only one vowel, as we have seen in oi, au, eu, etc.** Another way of saying this is that a syllable contains only one vowel sound in French. Now, compare the following English and French cognates and note how the pronunciation is changed because of the difference in syllabification.

English	French	English	French
off-ice	o-ffice	meth-ode	mé-thode
cabinet	cabinet	cath-o-lic	ca-tho-lique
lim-it	li-mite	prob-lem	pro-blème
phi-los-o-pher	phi-lo-sophe	cur-i-os-i-ty	cu-ri-o-si-té

Now, try it yourself. Take your pencil and divide the following words into syllables, then pronounce them.

diviser, auteur, oiseau, décisif, abuser

That wasn't difficult. Let's discuss some exceptions to the basic rule.

33. We have been talking about dividing syllables when only one consonant appears between two vowels. What should you do if two consonants appear together as in fraction, exporter, or photographie? One way to find

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*Available in written form upon request.

**Exceptions: words with a diaeresis (two dots)over one of the vowels, such as Noël, naïve, haïr.

out is to pronounce those words carefully in English: frac-tion; ex-port; pho-to-gra-phy; ge-o-gra-phy. French acts the same way: it splits the syllable between two consonants, except when one of the consonants is r or l: ta-bleau, pa-trie, not tab-leau or pat-rie. In these cases, the consonant group is considered to be a unit, just as are ch, th or ph. Divide these with your pencil and pronounce them:

cacher	architecture *	la pathologie
athée	géographie	orthodontiste
technologie *	philosophe	monter
prendre	armoire	table

34. One last item before leaving the problem of syllabification. You remember our discussion of e in paragraphs 12 and 16. In some short French words of only one syllable, this unaccented e is not mute. These are the words je, le, de, me, se, que, ce, etc. In most words in which an additional vowel occurs, however, the final e is not counted as a separate syllable. For example, the following words have only one syllable: parle, lire, livre, porte, etc. Remember this when you are trying to determine where to put the accent or stress. Now try some longer words and remember to put the accent on the syllable which I have marked:

acCEPTE renaISSANCE expériENCE obSTACLE

35. Now we need to consider an important item, the influence of the letters n and m.* First, remind yourself, (I have tried to emphasize it throughout these pages), that the letters of the alphabet are simply symbols of sounds, not sounds in and of themselves. These symbols often have different phonetic values (or sounds) than they do in English. We have talked about the mute e and the fact that it has an effect on the pronunciation of a consonant which precedes it. With this in mind, pronounce the following words, in which you see both -ne and -me:

fine	cîme
dôme	mène
cousine	une
voisine	flane
anime	peine
âme	

This seems to be easy enough and follows the rules with which we are acquainted.

36. The important thing to remember concerning nasals is that the letters associated with them, n and m, are not pronounced as such. We are, in reality, not dealing with consonants as much as with vowels, and we speak of nasal vowels. The n and m are devices to indicate that the vowel is to be nasalized (pronounced partially through the nose).

37. The nasal vowels are not difficult for an American to reproduce. The problem comes in transferring what you see on paper to a distinctive and totally predictable audial signal, something which has meaning for your ear, as well as for your eye. In addition, although there are only four nasal vowels, there is a fairly large number of ways of representing these sounds, all of which you will want to learn to associate with the sound.

*n and m are called the nasal consonants.

38. Let's begin with the easiest nasal vowel: [õ]. Remember that o is always pronounced o in French. All of the following words rhyme with go: son, ton, mon, don, non. In the following list, do not pronounce any letter after the nasal unless there is an e at the end of the word. If an e is at the end of the word, pronounce all consonants.

dont	les moutons	ils vont	le ponton
ils sont	le baron	il tombe	le monde
le nonce	nous parlons	nous allons	long
le pilon	les gonds	le fond	Simon
la bonté	elle rompe	la fonte	nous dormons

39. Remember that the letters n and m are only signs of nasalization. This means they do not have their own phonetic value. Do not make the mistake of pronouncing either the n or the m in the following pairs of words which rhyme. That's right. The first example rhymes exactly with the second.

don	dom
non	nom
conte	compte
plon (a nonsense word)	plomb

Now go back to paragraph 28 and pronounce that list of words again. With the knowledge you now have, you should sound quite a bit like a native Frenchman. You should also see how very rapidly your comprehension and speaking ability can grow if you generalize what you see in that paragraph. Every word which ends in tion or sion in English is, in reality, a French word, and was a French word before it was an English word. You should be able to write down correctly quite a few French words ending in those letters, even though you have never seen them as French words before. And of course you should be able to recognize them when you hear them pronounced. Let's

40. Now review and do quiz No. 4 as you have done the other ones.

41. Now let's combine what you know about syllabification and nasalization*. The big question is, how do you pronounce m and n when these letters occur in the middle of the word? Do these letters have specific phonetic values of their own or are they merely signs of nasalization? Good question! The answer: The rule of syllabification takes precedence over the rule of nasalization. This means you split a word like "dominer" in which you have to be concerned about "-omi-," like this, "do-mi-ner" instead of like this "dom-i-ner". Look at the following list and make sure you see why the words in the "wrong" column are wrong.

Wrong	Right
dom-es-tique	do-mes-tique
mon-o-logue	mo-no-logue
ton-a-li-té	to-na-li-té

Now let's make it a little tougher. Use your pencil to divide the following words into syllables. After you have made the divisions, pronounce the words, making sure you pronounce nasals wherever appropriate.

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*If you don't think you've got syllabification down well, it might be worthwhile to go over paragraphs 31 through 33 again. In fact, you ought to refer to those paragraphs quite often as you read the paragraphs on nasals.

nous combinons	nous montons	le nombre
nous tombons	le pontife	vous répondez

42. You will see that knowing how to divide the word into syllables is important when you say the following list of words which combine the two concepts you have just learned. Skip this, if you think you have the idea, but do it if you need more practice.

pomper	volontaire	gonflé	chômage
confortable	computer	foncé	la fonte
montage	sondage	monter	raconter

43. Now that you have mastered the nasal o, which is easy, you can move on to one of the nasal vowels which give Americans a lot of trouble because it is spelled so many different ways. It is most commonly spelled as -in and -im (and of course -yn and -ym). The following French words all assonate with the English words fan, man and dam; that is, the vowels of English fan, man and dam rhyme with the last two French letters. REPEAT THE ENGLISH WORD BEFORE YOU SAY EACH OF THESE FRENCH WORDS:

la fin	le pin	le lin	Chopin
le vin	le marin	le cousin	divin
l'assassin	le matin	Martin	dessin

-oin is a combination of -oi and -in. Make the following words rhyme with English "Lou-Ann" spoken rapidly:

loin	le soin	le foin	moins
le coin	il joint	pointe	moine

Words ending in -ain and -ein are SPECIAL. PAY NO ATTENTION TO THE A IN -AIN OR THE E in -EIN. Pronounce only -in so that it assonates with English man.

la main	sain	le train	le pain
le grain	certain	sein	humain
l'Américain	le Mexicain	plein	saint

HOWEVER, if there is an e following -ain, make the -ai- rhyme with è. THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. REVIEW PARAGRAPH 19. Note that -eine rhymes with -aine.

saine	certaine	veine	reine
américaine	mexicaine	pleine	la Seine

-ien is a special combination. Pretend that yin is a French word and make it assonate with English man, as above. Now make that rhyme with words ending in -ien. Another way to do this is to make the first example rhyme with "See-Ann" spoken rapidly.

mien	bien	rien	je viendrais
italien	parisien	chrétien	il tient

44. You are probably doing very well if you are making them all rhyme with vin. BE CAREFUL you do not close your lips and do not pronounce m in words such as faim and daim which follow. Remember that m is a symbol that the vowel is to be nasalized.

la faim	le dain	le saint
il craint	il éteint	je peins
elle ceint	moyen*	le doyen*
meditérranéen*	européen*	examen*

45. Now let's combine these principles concerning the sound -in with the knowledge you have of syllabification. Pronounce these words out loud after you have divided them with your pencil:

simple	le timbre	limpide
implorer	impossible	l'injustice
installer	l'insecte	le symbole
le syntaxe	le lynx	instrument
intime	importer	infini

Now be careful. Are you going to nasalize the vowel preceding the n or m, or are you going to split the syllables so the first syllable ends in a vowel sound? If you are not sure, re-read paragraphs 31 and 32. Then apply those ideas to these words. Split them, using your pencil, then pronounce them out loud.

image	imiter	inacceptable
inédit	inégal	inexorable
inutile	inorganique	inestimable

Just to make sure you did it right, I'll tell you right now; all these words were supposed to begin with the English sound ee. Why? Because the split of "image" is "i-mage, not "im-age". The i is not nasalized. (see paragraph 41). Now comes the real test. Can you pronounce all the words in this paragraph correctly without stopping to think more than an instant?

46. When you know this material, take quiz No. 5.

47. Are you tired of that? Well then, let's move to the most common (probably) nasal vowel in French, [ã], represented by the groups of letters -an, -en, -am and -em. Again, don't pronounce final consonants and do remember the rules about syllabification. These words all rhyme with English want. In fact, maybe you already pronounce "envelope" with a French en sound.

tant	planter	le ban
la lampe	camper	chanter
la tante	la chance	Adam
ample	la chambre	le tyran
le semblant	penser	tendre
ensemble	cent	membre
tempête	tente	remplacer
mental	gens	tend

48. A word WHICH ENDS IN A NASAL + CONSONANT(S) behaves in a peculiar way. DO NOT PRONOUNCE any consonant following m or n; simply NASALIZE the vowel preceding n or m, but DO NOT pronounce n or m OR ANYTHING FOLLOWING IT:

le champ	le camp	le flanc	le banc
le temps	le franc	blanc	le sang

*The last syllable still rhymes with -in.

Note that words ending in -nc DO NOT FOLLOW THE CaReFuL rule because the nasal rule blocks out c,r,f&l. HOWEVER, if a word such as one of these ends in e, DO PRONOUNCE everything, just as you learned in paragraph 12:

elle campe	la banque	blanche	la France
il rampe	trempe	la semance	il pense

49. Fairly often you can expect to run into a word that ends in ent. Be careful. If it ends in ment, pronounce those letters as you learned in paragraph 47. But if the m is missing you are going to have to decide whether or not the word is a verb. If it is a verb, do not pronounce nt. Just act as if the nt were not there. If, however, the word is not a verb, pronounce the whole word. Column one is composed of verbs, column two is not.

ils parlent	souvent
elles demandent	le président
ils entendent	éminent
elles campent	le précédent
ils président	

Do not confuse ent with ant. You must pronounce nt as a nasal in pendant but not in pendent, in parlant but not in parlent.

50. The last nasal vowel is represented by un and um. These words rhyme with fun and "uh-huh." Be sure to not pronounce final n.

un	lundi	aucun
quelqu'un	le parfum	chacun
commun	importun	Verdun

51. Well, now you think you know everything there is to know about nasals. But there is one more detail of some importance. Fairly often, the letters n or m may be doubled, as in the words canne, innocent, immoral, or bannir. The thing to remember here is that a double n or m cancels out the nasal quality of the vowel.* The letters n or m are pronounced just as in English and the pronunciation of the vowels is not affected by them, just as they would not be affected by the letters t, d, s, z, l or r. Pronounce the following words, but do not nasalize the vowel:

immoral	immodeste	immatériel
immédiate	innovation	innocent
immaculé	immobile	immensité

Now compare these words with the second group of words in paragraph 45. Now can you pronounce these without hesitation?

injecter	imiter	innombrable
l'innovation	indécis	instituer
inachevé	immonde	inondation

Succinctly stated, the rules for nasals are:

A. vowel + nasal + vowel = pronounce n or m and do not nasalize vowel: image; amour; énergie, etc.

B. vowel + nasal + consonant = do not pronounce n or m and do nasalize vowel: insecte, ample, entier, etc.

C. vowel + nasal + another nasal = same as A: immoral; année*, etc.

The problem now is how to remember all this information. Here is a sentence that contains all the nasals and will serve as a mnemonic device to help you remember these sounds: "Un bon vin blanc."

*See paragraphs 62c and d for exceptions; e or o and doubled nasal.

52. When you are sure you know this material, do quiz No. 6.

53. French has a group of sounds which some people, for some romantic reason, think are "pretty". We French speakers are not proud of our language's beauty, but rather of its logic and clarity. When you have learned more French, you will probably come to agree with us. The sounds we will consider here are almost exactly like some sounds in English. It is interesting that you are entranced with these sounds in French but that you do not consider them to be particularly esthetically appealing in English. The letters g (when followed by e or i) and j are easy for Americans to pronounce; they sound exactly like the s in pleasure and measure. Now say these words out loud.

juste	la jupe	le jour
joli	jeune	Jules
je	jaloux	Jean
la géographie	agir	le régime
Georges	lige	Gide
loger	rage	la gerbe
visage	fragile	le mirage

Another one of these "French" sounds is exactly like the sh in English show. It is spelled with ch, however, instead of sh. Pronounce:

le chef	chic	le chauffeur
crochet	chaud	chez
la moustache	la brochure	le chaperon
Vichy	le charme	l'architecture
le niche		

54. Before going to the next item, let's remind ourselves that English is a very weird and unpredictable language. Pronounce all the following English words which have the letter g in them: game, grand, dragon, globe, gun, wagon, gem, gentle, rage, register, gin, gymnasium. Why is it, do you think, that some of these words have one sound of g while the others have another? There is a reason, and you should be able to figure it out. As we have suggested in other paragraphs, it depends on the environment of the letter in question. The g in the first six words is a hard g and sounds like the g in guy. The g in the last six words is a soft g and sounds like the g in gin. HERE IS THE RULE: In any word containing g, if g is followed by e or i, it is soft; in all other cases, it is hard. And that is why G I R L sounds like JERL---Hey, no it doesn't! What happened to my rule? Well, in English, it's not 100 percent foolproof.* BUT, in French it is. In other words, ge and gi are always pronounced like the French j, while g and any other letter is pronounced like g in guy. Knowing that, how would you pronounce the following words?

les bagages	la gloire	élégant
le groupe	église	egalité
grand	global	le golfe
gerbe	Gide	geler

55. If the language requires a hard g sound followed by i or e, the letter u is inserted between g and the vowel:

le guide	longue	le gué
la vogue	le rogue	la langue

*A written explanation is available upon request.

English uses the u to accomplish the same purpose. How would you pronounce the words in column two if they did not have u as they do in column one?

league	leage
guess	gess
guide	gide
morgue	morge

56. Just as there is hard and soft g, so there is hard and soft c. You can see that soft c sounds exactly like double s in French. Hard c sounds like k in English, (written que in French). Let's talk about que and qui for a moment. Say these English words: quick, queen, quit, queer. Notice that you are putting in the sound of w: KWIK; KWEEN; KWIT; KWEER. In French, you must not put in that w. In other words, if a Frenchman saw the word quick, he would pronounce what you think is kick; queen is like keen; quit is kit, and so on. Try these French words:

qui	unique	antique
que	grotesque	qualifier
Québec	critique	artistique
qualité	la torque	burlesque

So qu always sounds just like English k.

57. There is a special symbol, a c with a hook called a cedille, written ç. It occurs before a, o or u if a soft c is desired:

le français reçu façade la leçon

To make a soft g before a, o or u, an e is inserted: Do not, however, pronounce e.

mangeons Georges sergeant

58. To resumé the g's and c's in the most succinct form, consult the following; underlined letters show possible letter combinations.

English	French	English	French
game	égalité	car	car
got	gothique	cot	corps
gut	guttural	cut	reculer
gem	geler	cent	cent
gin	Gide	circumstance	circonstance
* congeal	songeant	forceable	français
* geography	Georges	*-ceo-(so)	garçon
* -geu-	avantageux	*-ceu-	reçu
guess	gué	keel	que
guide	guide	kill	qui

* No words exist with these letter combinations.

59. Before we leave g, let's discuss another letter combination. The letters gn have the same sound as English ny in canyon and ni in union and onion. We've already talked about the fact that some letters have

no actual sound value of their own; h in the combination th has no value whatsoever in French. In the combination gn, the letter g is merely a symbol that n is supposed to be pronounced with the ny sound. There is a historical reason that I can give you if you want it.* Now, pronounce the following words, using the hints to help:

l'agneau lan-yo magnifique man-yee-feek signaler seen-ya-lay

Do it again. Don't look at the g. Look at the n and give it a little lilt, making it sound exactly like the Spanish ñ if you are acquainted with that. Now try pronouncing these words.

Espagne	Avignon	la ligne
la montagne	il gagne	filet mignon
champagne	ignorer	champignon

60. When you know the preceding material, do quiz No. 7.

61. Other groups of letters which give Americans trouble are ill and ille. In the great majority of words containing these combinations and for our purposes, the l's are simply not pronounced. Pronounce the i as always in these words, but do not pronounce the l's. Note that this is an exception to paragraphs 11 and 12. Divide the words into syllables with your pencil.

fille	famille	sillon
cheville	piller	chenille

Unfortunately, we must now learn several variations. -ail, -aill- and -aille are pronounced exactly as the English letter I, complete with diphthong. You must consider -ail- as one unit and not divide it -a-il- or -ai-l-. Remember, too, to not pronounce the l's, divide the words into syllables with your pencil.

Versailles	détail	rail
travail	faillir	saillir
gaillard	qu'il aille	bail

-eil, -eill- and -eille are pronounced exactly as the English letter A, complete with diphthong. Again, do not pronounce the l's. Again, divide the words into syllables with your pencil.

Marseille	meilleur	pareil
vieil	bouteille	oreille

Finally, there are three -ille words and their derivatives in which the l's ARE pronounced. They are mille, ville and tranquille. The expression mille villes tranquilles means " a thousand peaceful towns", and if you keep that little expression in your mind, it will help you remember the exception to the rule. In a word which has one of these words as its base, the l's are pronounced: i.e. village, million, etc.

62. The letter h plus vowel poses few problems in theory, although in practice, it is difficult. Americans cannot help but associate some sort of a sound with h, but in French, there simply is no sound. It is as if the letter were not there. Again, I can give you a historical (or, if you are a purist, an historical) reason if you will ask me for it.* But if you are too busy--go ahead and pronounce the following words, remembering to not

*Available in written form upon request.

pronounce the h. Scratch it out with yourpencil if necessary.

hôtel	hôpital	humain	humble
huit	habile	héros	humour
habiter	Mulhouse	bonheur	heure

63. We have covered a lot of ground. We need to discuss one more letter whose pronunciation is the trademark of the French language, even though this letter is pronounced in the French fashion in German and Swedish words. We are talking about the letter r. I would like you to know, by the way, that the sounds of th and r, in English, give the Frenchman fits. Some Americans have a little difficulty with the French r, but the problem stems mainly from the American's inability to see r as a symbol of a sound, rather than the sound itself. There is no sound in French which is equivalent to the sound which r stands for in English. It would make just as much sense to use the number 7 as the letter r in spelling the word Pa7is. A Frenchman would be bewildered with the sound produced by an American, no matter what the symbol might be. You, the American, however, have it lucky, because the French r is quite similar to some sounds with which you are probably already acquainted. That's right. The French r is not too different from some sounds you already know. Actually, it would be better to say that there are at least two r's in French, and possibly three. The same symbol represents all three, just as th has two sounds in English; the position of r in the word determines which of the three forms it will take when it is pronounced.

64. Obviously, the easiest r is the one that is not pronounced where it occurs at the end of infinitives ending in -er. See paragraph 17 to refresh your memory. The pronounced r at the end of a word or a syllable resembles the r that President Kennedy or any other person from New England uses. There is a hint of an r, but it is not strongly pronounced, whereas the r most Americans pronounce is readily distinguishable. Pronounce the English words in the column I with only a hint of an r, as in column II. Then pronounce the French words in column III so they rhyme with column II.

I		II		III	
car	fair	cah	fay	car	faire
sir	tar	suh	tah	soeur	tard
leer	core	leah	coh	lire	corps

65. Pronounce the following words in English: baggage, logger, dogged, foggy, nugget, rugger. All of the g sounds in these words are guttural. Most people think the German language is guttural and ugly. The truth of the matter is, French also has a guttural sound, but people do not consider it to be ugly. The French r, when it is in the middle or at the beginning of a word, is GUTTURAL. It is a gently uttered guttural, however, not harsh, not over-done. It actually is a very short, hardly distinct gargling sound. We will use a special symbol, ġ, to help us remember that it sounds very much like a gargle. This sound is most easily produced when it occurs between the letters o or a because these vowels are produced in nearly the same region that the French r* is produced. Say the nonsense words in columns one and two in French then say the French word in column three which rhymes exactly with the nonsense word.

*It is called uvular r.

bagon	bagon	baron
laggon	laggon	larron
lagousse	lagousse	larousse
pagol	pagol	parole
togo	togo	taureau
couggons	couggons	courrons

Another way of achieving the French r is to voice the unvoiced Spanish j in Juan*or the German ch in Bach or buch. Both of these sounds, although harsher than the French sound, are quite close to it.

66. The hardest r's in French occur at the beginning of a word or syllable in combination with another consonant. Remember that the sound is a guttural one, always, and this will help you get started. But make it a gentle guttural or gargling sound, (as if you were clearing your throat with your mouth open) not harsh like Hitler saying "Achtung!" Pronounce these words:

route	ramper	ronron	rire
rat	rien	raser	récit
radio	rapport	rompre	rôle

When another consonant stands just before French r, you will perhaps have to place a very short "jump" vowel between these two consonants. Pronounce these, comparing the nonsense words of column one to the French words of column two:

f(a)gan-çais	français
p(a)ge-mier	premier
t(a)gonc	tronc
c(a)gaint	craint
b(a)gun	brun

The sounds represented by the letters r and u are the only sounds that will actually require practicing to produce correctly. All the other sounds of the French language are already in the English language. The main problem is to learn to associate a certain visual symbol with a particular sound. After you have learned to do that, you will have overcome the biggest hurdle that keeps Americans from speaking French.

67. The foregoing pages are a general outline of the principles of French pronunciation of individual words. I do not claim that it is complete, but I do believe it covers close to 95 percent of the problems you will encounter if you are in your first or second year's study of French. Now what about the other 5 percent? There are some maverick words which you would do well to learn right now.

a. The most common word in French, probably, is monsieur. Since it is said so often, the pronunciation has been eroded immensely. Do not pronounce the letters which are stricken out: m~~o~~n~~s~~ieu~~r~~.

b. When the letters mp are followed by a consonant, often in an infinitive, they are not pronounced: compter, dompter, exempter, sculpter, prompt, temps.

c. The pronunciation of e when followed by mm or nn is somewhat different than what one might expect it to be. It acts as if it were the letter a. This is why in the words femme, solennel and all words ending in -emment,

*Spanish "Juan" and French "Rouen" rhyme almost exactly (except that the n in Rouen is not pronounced).

you should pronounce the e preceding the mm or nn as if it were a:

intelligemment	évidemment
différemment	récemment
apparemment	indépendemment
fréquemment	patiemment

d. If o is followed by nn or mm, the vowel rhymes with English-un as in bun and run.

bonne	l'homme	honnête
la couronne	donner	l'honneur
le dommage	nommer	connaît

e. The verb est varies in its pronunciation depending on its environment. The s in it is never pronounced, but the e may be pronounced é and è. See paragraph 9 of the chapter on liaison to determine which one you should use.

68. Do quiz No. 8.

69. The French language is evolving. There are some aspects of French pronunciation which have developed rather recently, to say nothing of new vocabulary. You need to be aware of the fact that French pronunciation is evolving, because if you take this booklet to be the GOSPEL, you might have a schizophrenic fit if you happen upon a fairly traditional book which disagrees with some of the principles I have enunciated. The changes are so subtle, however, that you will probably never notice them and you can be sure that even most Frenchmen vary their pronunciation habits somewhat. The greatest change is occuring with regard to the sounds é and è. In the past, ais and est have been pronounced as è; nowadays they are almost always pronounced as é. It is interesting to note that English pronunciation is evolving too. I have heard the word "important" pronounced as "impordant" by many educated people from the Southeastern U.S.

70. I have not made any comments about the necessity of eliminating diphthongs. It is very important, if you plan to speak French without an American accent, to eliminate your natural tendency as an American to deform the sound of vowels as you pronounce them. French vowels have a fixed bell-like sound which does not change one iota as the speaker is pronouncing them. But since this problem is not directly related to that of associating new sounds with visual representations of old sounds, we will deal with it later and after you have assimilated this book completely.

ADDENDA

5A. There are actually two pronunciations for o in the French which is spoken in the north. In the south, the difference between these two o's is less noticeable. Since the biggest problem for Americans is that they forget to pronounce o like o (instead they pronounce it like ah), I have chosen to not introduce too many variations of o so as to avoid as much confusion as possible. Nevertheless, here is the rule, if you happen to be curious:

o rhymes with English no when:
1. it is the final sound of the word (i.e., when it is followed by an unpronounced consonant, such as t, d, s, p;
2. it is spelled ô (with circumflex);
3. it is spelled o + s + vowel (usually e);
4. it is followed by -tion.

Examples of each group:

1. mot, sot, pot, lot, clos, dos, gros, vos, sirop, trop.
2. tôt, le nôtre, l'hôtel, côté.
3. rose, poser, chose, ose, dose.
4. motion, émotion, potion, notion.

However, o does not rhyme with English no but rather with the o in English come in the following cases:

1. when it is not the final sound of a word (i.e., when it is followed by a pronounced consonant--except s, see no. 3 above).
2. when it is not in the final syllable in a word containing more than one syllable.
3. when it is followed by two consonants, and especially when the two consonants are the same.

Examples of each group:
1. note, mode, vote, robe, Rome.
2. romance, motif, colonie, costume.
3. nord, fort, porte, noble, comme, sotte, possède.

HOWEVER, BECAUSE SO MANY AMERICANS FORGET and make the mistake of pronouncing the words in the first column with the pronunciation of that in the second,

pardon	pardun
octobre	actobre
dominer	daminer
politique	palitique

I WOULD PREFER that you learn to pronounce all o's so that they rhyme with English no. Then we will make the smaller corrections

later. The worst thing you can do is make o rhyme with English ah. If you do, French note will sound exactly like English not, French mode like English mod, French robe like English rob. These pronunciations are not correct. Better an o rhyming with no than rhyming with not.

6A. REMEMBER that to turn a singular noun in French into a plural noun, you add a written s, just as in English spelling. REMEMBER too, however, that you do not pronounce that final s. Nor do you pronounce the consonant which precedes the final s of a plural noun in French. In a few cases, however, the final s of one word will be carried over onto the beginning of the next word. See the section on liaison at the end of the book for further explanation.

11A. An important extension of the CaReFuL rule is the following: Do not pronounce final c in words ending in -nc: blanc, flanc, franc, tronc, banc. The n is a symbol of nasality and that is why no consonant appearing after it will be pronounced. cf. Paragraph # 67b. Do pronounce -nc-, however, if a vowel, particularly e, follows it. cf. Paragraph # 48.

11B. There are several words whose final consonants are pronounced, even though they do not follow the CaReFuL rule. These words are quite common, so once you know them and the rules through Paragraph 70 of this booklet, you have covered 99% of French pronunciation.

Pronounce all the letters in each of these words:

sud*	sens	fils(pronounce fis)	net
ouest*	coq	gaz	tennis
est**	donc	index	bus

12A. No one knows how many French nouns end in e. You must remember, however, that every one of these nouns may be made plural simply by adding a written s. The addition of the s does not change the pronunciation of the word in any way. (See para.17): porte rhymes with portes in every respect as does auto with autos, bat with bats, etc.

15A. It is useful to remember that a word which begins with s always has the hissing sound. Be sure to read the paragraph dealing with liaison because a word ending in s often has an important role to play in the pronunciation of a following word.

16A. Six of the nine one-syllable words mentioned above undergo a slight but important modification in pronunciation when a final s is added: ce, de, le, me, se and te rhyme with English "uh", but ces, des, les, mes, ses and tes rhyme with English "say".

16B. It is important to realize that there are variations in the pronunciation of every individual. Some of these variations create

*Nord is the only name of a direction in French in which the last letter is not pronounced.

**French word for "east." Note that the verb "is" (est) is spelled the same way but pronounced differently.

difficulties in comprehension, while others simply call attention to regional dialects or differences: "I want to go go home" or "Ah wanna go home." Your pronunciation may be criticized but you will be understood by Americans. But a Frenchman learning English would have difficulty understanding the second expression, even if he could understand the first one. "You are speaking too fast," he would protest. This is why it is important for you to speak English distinctly when you speak to someone who does not know English very well.

Unfortunately, it is almost inevitable that you will eventually meet a Frenchman (or hear one on one of the tapes) who speaks very rapidly. What can you do about it? The first thing you can do is say "Parlez plus lentement et plus distinctement, s'il vous plaît." Number two: you should realize that the e caduc is the letter which is not being pronounced in the great majority of cases. This means that livre will come out as livr', table as tabl' etc.; de and le are sometimes reduced to almost nothing:

	le livre	le soulier	peu de beurre	de la ville
become	l'livr'	l'soulier	peud beurre	dla ville

When e (but not é or è) appears in the middle of a word, it may also be reduced:

	la leçon	achetons	cheveux	cimetière
become	lal/çon	ach/tons	chveux	cim/tière

YOUR problem, then, will be to remember to place an e caduc in a given word or group of words when you have difficulty understanding it (them), just as you know that you are to replace /-na/ with/-t to/ in the expression "Ah wanna go home."

Finally, remember that you should not feel obligated to try to speak rapidly simply because native French people speak rapidly. In fact, until you have been speaking French for five years, I prefer that you speak slowly, clearly and distinctly and that you pronounce everything that should be pronounced. This means that in the great majority of cases, you should pronounce e caduc like English "uh":

1. when it is the only vowel in a word;
2. when it is preceded by a consonant plus r or l.

16C. It is important to note that when (1) e has no accent mark (2) e is followed by a single consonant (except a nasal) and (3) e is not in the last syllable of a polysyllabic word, (having more than one syllable), it is an e caduc and rhymes with English "uh."
peser, (puh-zay), petit, (puh-tee)
rebattre, venir, retourne, chevalier
levez, peler, avenue, velours

17A. It is fairly common to find e (without any accent) followed by two different consonants or by double consonants. When this occurs, pronounce that e like è (as in English bed and let):

cette	cesser	serre	appelle
peste	percer	merle	adjectif

19A. Remember that y is another sign for i or for double i. Ay can best be understood by seeing it as -ai-i-: pays = pai-is

28A. -ti- is always pronounced as -see- in French whenever it would be pronounced as -sh- or -see- in English: partial, action, diplomatie, démocratie, aristocratie.

45A. Verbs such as tenir, contenir, and retenir may have forms tient or tiennent. DO pronounce the nt in tient, but DO NOT pronounce it in tiennent. In other words, you should pronounce -ent, if it is preceded by i.

52A. -ch- is pronounced as -sh- in French in words in which it is pronounced like -ch- in English, plus the French word architecture. In words of Greek origin, in which -ch- appears as -k- in English, French also uses the -k- sound: echo, orchestre, Christ.

54A. Note that -gn- does not nasalize a word as simple m or n do. The vowel in signe rhymes with fine, not with fin.

59A. Do not confuse -gn- with -ng-. Note the difference between mangeons (man-jons) and mignon (mi-ni-on).

61A. The only words related to the milles, villes tranquilles family are million, milliard, village, villageois et tranquilliser. Cheville and famille are not, and the l's are not pronounced in those words.

65A. If you still have difficulty with r (especially intervocalic r) pronounce it as a heavily aspirated h:

baron = bahon	parole = pahol
taureau = toho	courrons = couhons

66A. If r occurs between a consonant and o (or ou or oi) the r may be dropped: trois rhymes with toi; droit with doit; froid with foi.

67A. Do quiz No. 9.

LIAISON (LINKING)

1. Most Americans think that there is a definite break between every word they pronounce, unless they pronounce them very very rapidly. But many phoneticians doubt if such divisions really are easy to determine. In other words, the blanks which occurr between words may not, in reality, be division markers. Just like letters, these blanks are symbols which serve to preserve the identity of words, but which are sometimes meaningless in any spoken language. For example, say rapidly "Did you stop it?" Couldn't you also write this sentence as "Di ja stah pit?" and have the same sounds? However if you were not a native speaker of English, and had learned, not to speak English, but only to read it, this new spelling and syllabic division would probably make the word incomprehensible to you. Other examples in English: "Did you ask her" pronounced rapidly could be written "Di jas ker?" "Give him what he said he wanted" is "Gi veem waddy settee wan ned." The new spelling looks like a foreign language, but that is because the speaker does not break his words where the typewriter does. The same is true of French, and especially of rapidly spoken French, since the divisions in spoken French occur more rarely than in spoken English. This means that although you know how to recognize and pronounce many sounds in French, you may be temporarily frustrated until you know some principles about liaison or linking. Linking is simply an amplification of the principle of syllabification which you learned in paragraphs 30, 31 and 32. Please review those paragraphs now.

2. As you know, in many French words, the last sound in a syllable which you pronounce is often a vowel sound, as in tout, ces, veut, amis, etc. But if a written consonant follows that sound, as is the case in the examples just cited, and if the following word begins with a vowel, you should ignore the space between the two words. Simply pronounce the two words as if they were one, making the syllable division after the last vowel sound of the first word. For example: les amis would be divided lé za mi; veut-il would be veu til; nous allons would be nou za llons; petit avion would be pe ti ta vion. It is interesting to note that the same phenomenon occurs in English, although admittedly less often: "an important event" would be "a nim por tan te vent." Now look at the following French phrase and reconstruct it so that every syllable, where possible, begins with a consonant and ends with a vowel, as explained in paragraph 30: "Il a soupé avec Armand." Your reconstructed version should look like this: "I la sou pé a ve cAr mand."

3. Learning how to understand and use the principle of liaison effectively requires a re-orientation of your thinking. You will have to start looking at the beginning of a following word before you have finished pronouncing a preceding word. It is not as hard as you might think, however, because, as you have seen in the examples above, it already exists to a certain degree in English. In the following English and French examples, you see connecting lines which help you to look forward to the second word of the group:

English	French
Get_it!	cet_italien
Is_it_O.K.?	des_illuminations
Seven_Up.	un_usage
Fair_and square.	le_premier_Américain

As you learn more about liaison in both English and French, you will note that groups of words, rather than single words, form the basis of communication. Do not hesitate to say one word at a time to begin with, but realize that eventually you will be aiming to pronounce groups of words almost as if they were a single word.

4. Why does liaison exist? In addition to the fact that it is related to rapid speech, it also helps to group relevant words together into a single whole. To the native French speaker, this is another indication of the clarity and logic of his language: the ideas hang together because the sounds are linked together.

5. Since we speak in groups of three, four or five words in French, we must remember to put the accent, not on the last syllable of each word (as you may have been led to believe in the past, if you have studied French before)* on the last syllable of each group of words. Rather than saying "Voilà un hôTEL imporTANT," it would be better to say "Voilà un hôtel imporTANT" because hotel and important go together.

6. Now, let's move on to a specific rule concerning liaison. When you encounter a one-syllable word followed by a word beginning with a vowel, make the liaison:

vous êtes	nous avons	un état
ils entrent	mon oncle	cet enfant
les amis	des arbres	nous écrivons
ils ont	on écoute	chez eux
sont-ils	tout à coup	en Amérique
		tout autre

This rule will not hold water all the time, but it is enough for the present.

7. You will soon discover that liaison is not always made, so it is time that I confess that in some cases, it is optional while in some cases it is even forbidden. The most important cases in which you should not make a liaison is between a noun- subject (but not a pronoun-subject) and its verb. This is good because it will force you to think about the structure of the sentence. You will discover with time when you should and when you should not make a liaison. By the way, keep in mind that the more liaisons you make, the more formal you sound.

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*I have to confess something at this point. Strictly speaking, it is not true that every French word receives an accent on the last syllable, as I suggested in paragraphs 7 and 29. Only the last syllable of the last word in the group of related words is accented.

8. Remember that I said earlier in paragraph number 62, that h is not pronounced. This means that you pronounce les hommes and les heures as if the letter h were not even there. Take a look in your dictionary, however, under the letter h. You will note that there is an asterisk or a star by some of the words. This means that you do not make the liaison with those words. If you link les héros, you have said les zéros (the zeros, not the heros). If you link les hauteurs, you have said les auteurs (the authors, not the heights).

9. It is important to realize that est, an extremely common verb has two pronunciations depending on its context. When est is followed by a word beginning with a vowel, it rhymes with cette; when est is followed by a word beginning with a consonant, it rhymes with -é- (and et).

Examples:

il est (é) là	il est (è) ici	elle est (é) partie	elle est (è) arrivée
C'est vrai	C'est impossible	C'est la vie	C'est-à-dire

10. On the other hand, the t of et is NEVER pronounced and the word is always pronounced like é. Say these groups of words:

homme et animal	oeil et oreille	parti et arrivé
bateau et avion	or et argent	parents et amis
Marie et Anne	voir et ecouter	écrivains et auteurs

11. Re-read the paragraph 26 concerning voiced and unvoiced consonants. In many cases where a consonant occurs at the end of a word and the following word begins with a vowel, you must link the first word to the second as you have already learned. But the pronunciation of the linking consonant may be altered, as follows:

comprend-il	--compren-t-il	vend-il	--ven-t-il
rend-on	--ren-t-on	tend-elle	--ten-t-elle
neuf enfants	--neuv-enfant	six éléphants	-si-zéléphants
deux arbres	--deu-zarbres	aux étudiants	-au-zétudiants

12. Do quiz No. 10.

Study Questions

The number of each question corresponds to the number of each paragraph describing the sounds.

1. What is a cognate?
2. How long should it take to learn most of the rules of French pronunciation?
3. What do the letters i and y in French rhyme with in English?
4. Why is it difficult for a speaker of French to learn English? Is French pronunciation more and less regular than English?
5. What is the sound of o in French? Why do many Americans have problems with this sound?
6. What is a good rule of thumb concerning the pronunciation of final consonants in French? What are some of the most common final consonants?
7. On which syllable would a French speaker put the accent in these words: important, industrial, difficulté, electricité?
8. Give an English word which rhymes with the a in Paris.
9. Give an English word which rhymes with ou in loupe.
10. Do you feel that you have mastered all the material? Could you pass 85% of it on a test?
11. What is the CaReFuL rule? Are there any exceptions to it? Explain.
12. Is final e important in French? Why? Explain in detail.
13. What happens if you have two or more consonants at the end of a word?
14. What does intervocalic mean?
15. What is a good way to remember the sound of single and double s in French?
16. What does the French word "me" rhyme with? An e caduc is just barely pronounced; underline the e caduc if it appears in any of the following words: porte, livre, mise, couverte, octobre, secrétaire.
17. What is the sound of French é? of French è and ê? of -er at the end of infinitives? of final -et and -ez? of -es occuring at the end of words of more than one syllable? of e followed by a double consonant?
18. What are some homonyms in French? Give an example of a homograph in English.
19. What are the two sounds of -ai- in French? How can you tell when to pronounce -ai- one way or the other? Give an example of some key words to help you remember this rule.
20. Do you think it would be helpful to have animated visual aids to learn French phonetics? Would you be willing to help make them?
21. With what sound in English does French -au- rhyme? How about French -eau-?
22. Explain how you would teach to a non-speaker of French how he should position his lips and tongue in order to say the French letter u. Which is harder to say correctly, the sound u or the sound ou?
23. Why are math and foreign language study important?
24. Explain how you would teach a non-speaker of French to say the eu sound in the word professeur. Explain what English word you would rhyme with the French sound. Explain how to pronounce the two other sounds of eu.

25. With what English sound does French oi rhyme?
26. What are voiced and unvoiced consonants? Give two or three examples of each.
27. What is the sound represented by th in French?
28. How does the English pronunciation of words ending in -tion differ from the French pronunciation?
29. Write out the following words université, télévision, organisation, using the following symbols: French i = English ee; French é = English ay; a = ă; o = ŏ. Capitalize the syllable which receives the accent.
30. Do you feel that you are learning French pronunciation?
31, 32. How does a speaker of English divide words into syllables as compared to a speaker of French? How would you state succinctly to another student the best way to remember syllabification?
33. How does one divide a French word into syllables if two consonants appear in immediate succession?
34. How many syllables do these words have: parle, lire, livre, porte, obstacle? table, ouch?
35. How are m and n pronounced when they are followed by an e?
36, 37, 38. Give an example of an English word which rhymes with the letter o in French monde, bon, Simon and allons. What is the mistake most Americans will make if they are not careful with French words containing on or om?
39. What is the difference in pronunciation between final -on and final -om? How would you teach an American student this difference?
40,41,42. You are now acquainted with rules about nasals and syllabification. Which takes precedence?
43. With what English word does the vowel in French final -in rhyme? What is a good way to remember the pronunciation of -oin? of -ain? What important item must you keep in mind when pronouncing -aine? What is a good way to remember the pronunciation of -ien?
44. How do you pronounce -aim? -ein? exemen?
45,46. What must you keep in mind when you pronounce a word which begins with in- or im-?
47. What word in English may serve as a hint in pronouncing French tant, Adam, membre or gens?
48. What pitfalls must you avoid in such words as camp, temps, franc and banc?
49. If you were a teacher of French, what would you warn your students about with regard to words ending in -ent?
50. If you were a teacher of French, how would you use your students' knowledge of English to teach them to pronounce French -un correctly?
51,52. What is the effect of -nn- or -mm- on a preceding i or a? What expression should you remember as a mnemonic device to help you recall the sounds of nasals?
53. With what sounds in English do French j, gi and ge rhyme? With what sound in English does French ch rhyme most of the time?
54. Hard g sounds the same in both English and French. Give an example of a word with hard g in English. What vowels are characteristic of hard g in French? What vowels are characteristic of soft g in French?
55. Is it possible to turn a soft g in French into a hard g? How?
56. In French ci and ce, the letter c sounds exactly like English __ (which consonant?). In French ca, co, and cu, the letter c sounds exactly like English ___ (which consonant?). In French, qu- sounds

exactly like English ____, but not like English ____.
57. If you want to change French ca, co or cu so that they sound like sa, so or su, what do you do?
58. Do you still have problems with c and g? If so, ask someone for help!
59,60 What does French -gn- rhyme with?
61. How many syllables are there in the word fille? famille? With what English word does -ail or -aille rhyme? With what English word does -eil or -eille rhyme? What three words are exceptions to the -ille group?
62. How is h pronounced in French?
63. How many different pronunciations of French r are there?
64. How would you teach an English speaker to pronounce French r in the following words: lire, corps, faire.
65. What does this sign represent: ɡ? With what English sound or letter is an intervocalic French r most closely associated?
66. How would you describe the fully pronounced French r: guttural, retroflex (as in English run) or apico-dental (as in Spanish rio)?
67. How would you describe to an American in perfectly clear and comprehensible manner, the pronunciation of monsieur, so that he would be able to have confidence that he was pronouncing it correctly? When -mp- appears in an infinitive, what happens? With what sound does French e rhyme when it is followed by a double nasal? With what sound does French o rhyme when it is followed by a double nasal? What letter in the verb est is never pronounced?
68,69,70. Has this booklet helped you at all? What changes would you suggest for the next edition?

ADDENDA
5A. What is the mistake most Americans make when they see a word like politique?
6A. What change in pronunciation occurs when a noun is made plural by adding s?
11A. What is an important exception to the CaReFuL rule?
11B. Give two or three words in French in which every letter is pronounced, even final t, s or z.
12A. See item 6A.
15A. If a word begins with a single s, what is sound of that s?
16A. How does the pronunciation of a monosyllabic word such as ce or me change when s is added to the end of the word?
16B. What happens to e caduc when a French speaker speaks rapidly?
16C. How is e caduc pronounced in cheval, tenir and reçu?
17A. With what English sound does French e + two consonants rhyme (except two nasals)?
19A. What is a good way to deal with y, especially when it occurs in pays?
28A. How is -ti- pronounced? Give examples.
45A. When should -ent be pronounced?
52A. How is -ch- pronounced most of the time in French? What are exceptions?
54A. Does -gn- nasalize a preceding vowel?
65A, 66A. How would you teach an American to pronounce French r if he claims he has difficulty with it?

LIAISON

1. Does liaison exist in English? Give an example.
2. What is the basic principle governing liaison?
3,4. Why does it seem that French speakers speak rapidly?
5. Where does the accent come in a group of French words?
6,7. What is the first basic rule about liaison?
8. What role does the letter h play in liaison?
9. What is the pronunciation of the verb est? Give examples of all variations.
10. What is the pronunciation of the conjunction et? What mistake do Americans often make with respect to this word?
11. How may the pronunciation of the letters d, f and x be modified in a situation where liaison will be required?

The purpose of this book is to teach you to pronounce 85% of all words in the French dictionary correctly the first time you see them.

Once you know the principles of French phonetics you will be able to hear a great many French words and know exactly what they mean without ever having heard them before, because you will recognize the word as a cognate, a word which means the same as a word in English which is spelled the same.

A foreign language is foreign because one does not know how to untangle sounds. This book will help you do that.

NONE OF THE QUIZZES IN THIS BOOKLET WILL BE CORRECTED BY LE PROFESSEUR. Ils existent for your benefice. Vous may go to le laboratoire and listen to la bande (the tape) and do le quiz.

Quiz 1

The following is an exercise to show you that you already know how to spell many French words. Circle the word which corresponds to the sound you hear. Remember, you will be hearing French words, not English words.

1.	seat	sit	site	seet
2.	mel	meal	meil	mille
3.	eel	el	il	ale
4.	disk	desk	desque	disque
5.	office	affice	ouffice	affeece
6.	choc	chouc	shock	shook
7.	sou	sonde	son	sun
8.	côte	cot	coat	coot
9.	sotte	sott	sot	sort
10.	Paree	Pare	Paret	Paris
11.	esprise	esprit	esprite	espreé
12.	voss	vos	vosse	voc
13.	corps	coa	corne	corr
14.	voo	vuo	vous	vouse
15.	fool	full	foule	foul
16.	dew	doux	du	do
17.	to	two	tow	tout
18.	Lew	loup	loude	lewd
19.	soup	sup	soupe	soop
20.	mot	mou	moo	mote

Quiz 2

Circle the word which corresponds to the sound you hear. Remember, you are hearing French words, not English words.

1.	roc	rose	ro	rog
2.	parlay	parle	parlère	parler
3.	forme	former	formay	formere
4.	paper	papier	papie	papiay
5.	souliay	soulie	soulière	soulier
6.	lége	léger	légère	légay
7.	vis	vize	visse	vise
8.	baze	basse	base	bas
9.	poser	pozer	posser	poscer
10.	table	tabl	tabla	tablet
11.	octobra	octobr	octobre	octobret
12.	secret	sacre	sacra	secrat

Circle the word you hear:

13.	couvert	couverte
14.	galope	galop
15.	long	longe
16.	chez	chaise

Suppose you have two English words: (1) day and (2) bed. In the following words, you see a letter or group of letters which are underlined. If this rhymes most closely with day, circle no. 1. If it rhymes with bed, circle no.2.

17.	j'ai parlé	1	2
18.	il pèse	1	2
19.	frêle	1	2
20.	parler	1	2
21.	les	1	2
22.	selle	1	2
23.	français	1	2
24.	Seine	1	2
25.	laide	1	2

Quiz 3

Circle the word which corresponds to the sound you hear. Remember you are hearing French words, not English words.

1.	oto	euto	auto	outo
2.	tout	toute	tour	tousse
3.	doux	de	du	deux
4.	saoul	sul	sale	seul
5.	eu	ou	eux	au
6.	moi	maux	mais	mie
7.	tième	tame	temps	thème
8.	passion	pasion	bastian	potion
9.	acsian	axchon	action	aczion

10. What letter is the pair of the following:

(1)t: ___ (3) f: ___ (5) b: ___ (6) k: ___

(2)s: ___ (4) m: ___

11. What is the next logical number in the series:

1, 3, 5, 7, ___.

1, 3, 6, 10, 15, ___.

9/10, 7/8, 5/6, 3/4, ___ .

(This part of the quiz is to test your ability to see relationships and use symbols.)

Quiz 4

A

Circle the word you hear.

1.	obstacle	obstacla	obstacl	obstocle
2.	livre	livra	livr	liver
3.	bousher	boosher	boucher	bouchay
4.	anima	aneem	animer	anime
5.	coussin.	cousine	coozen	cousin
6.	dôme	doam	dom	done
7.	longue	longe	long	longuet
8.	mond	moaned	monde	mont
9.	nom	no	nof	note
10.	passion	pasion	potion	pazion

Quiz 5

Circle the word you hear.

1.	cofortable	confortable	camfortable	combfortable
2.	vin	van	vine	vaine
3.	cousin	cousin	coussin	coozan
4.	fan	fang	fainte	faim
5.	amporter	immporter	importer	importe
6.	imniter	inmiter	imiter	immiter
7.	symbole	sambol	sinebol	sanbole
8.	trine	traine	train	tran
9.	italian	italien	italienne	italyin
10.	bin	bien	bian	biene
11.	cointe	cowan	coine	coin

Now you are ready to take test #1. If you pass it, you are on your way to getting an A for the course. If you do not pass it with at least 85% correct, you must write out again the answers to the study questions up to paragraph 46.

Quiz 6

Circle the word you hear.

1.	comper	cimper	camper	coumper
2.	ban	bon	bone	bane
3.	tente	tint	tont	tent
4.	sont	cent	samble	sam
5.	ada	adom	Adam	adonne
6.	chantente	chantant	chantent	chantante
7.	lunedi	loundi	lundi	landi
8.	femme	fam	faim	fem
9.	innocent	inocent	immocent	ineocent
10.	imobile	imabile	inmobile	immobile

Now go back and pronounce, according to the rules, all the words which you have underlined. Do that for all the following quizzes because Test #2 will be oral.

Quiz 7

Circle the French word you hear.

1.	Jules	jewel	joul	jeul
2.	Vishy	Vichy	Viéshi	Vinchy
3.	jarbe	garbe	gerb	gerbe
4.	long	longue	longe	lonj
5.	artistic	artistique	artistik	artistigue
6.	façade	facade	fasade	faceade
7.	quelle	gelle	kelle	cual
8.	gide	guede	guide	gede
9.	montanya	montagne	montain	montaigne
10.	genya	gane	gagne	guenya

Quiz 8

Circle the French word you hear.

1.	fil	fee	fie	fille
2.	déti	déta	détail	détaie
3.	meilleur	major	mayeur	mailluer
4.	veille	vieille	viyé	vieille
5.	vila	vial	ville	veille
6.	umble	amble	omble	humble
7.	car	ca	care	carf
8.	baggage	barrage	baccage	bachage
9.	gôle	rôle	côle	jôle
10.	tente	trempe	temps	tronc

Quiz 9

Prononcez ces mots en français. Demander à un ami d'examiner votre pronunciation.

1. gros	2. l'hôtel	3. rose	4. émotion
5. Rome	6. noble	7. politique	8. les portes
9. banc	10. sens	11. donc	12. sud
13. me	14. mes	15. le livre	16. cheveux
17. achetons	18. peser	19. cette	20. pays
21. démocratie	22. tiennent	23. architecture	24. signe
25. courrons	26. trois		

Quiz 10

Prononcez ces expressions en français. Demandez à un ami d'examiner votre prononciation.

1. cet italien	2. le premier Américain	3. ils entrent
4. des arbres	5. tout autre	6. les hommes
7. les héros	8. il est là	9. C'est impossible
10. voir et écouter	11. parents et amis	12. rend-on
13. vend-il	14. aux étudiants	

Now vous êtes ready de faire l'examen numéro 2. Si vous pass it, vour avancez bien towards un A. Si vous ne passez pas, with 85% correcte, il est nécessaire that vous write out les réponses aux questions d'étude from numéro 47 to la fin.

Answers to Quizzes. Since you are trying to learn how to pronounce French, say all these words out loud when you finish a quiz.

Quiz 1: site, mille, il, disque, office, choc, son, côte, sot, Paris, esprit, vos, corps, vous, foule, doux, tout, loup, soupe, mou.

Quiz 2: rose, parler, former, papier, soulier, léger, vise, base, poser, table, octobre, secret, couverte, galop, long, chez, 1, 2, 2, 1, 1, 2, 1, 2, 2.

Quiz 3: auto, toute, du, seul, eux, moi, thème, potion, action, d, z, v, n, p, hard g, 9, 21, 1/2.

Quiz 4: obstacle, livre, boucher, animer, cousine, dom, long, monde, nom, potion.

Quiz 5: confortable, vin, cousin, faim, importer, imiter, symbole, train, italien, bien, coin.

Quiz 6: camper, ban, tent, cent, Adam, chantant, lundi, femme, innocent, immobile.

Quiz 7: Jules, Vichy, gerbe, longue, artistique, façade, quelle, guide, montagne, gagne.

Quiz 8: fille, détail, meilleur, vieille, ville, humble, car, barrage, rôle, temps.

Quiz 9 and 10. Oral quizzes.